

Rhoades gold mine find claimed by pair in Polecreek Canyon

Discovery of the lost Rhoades Gold Mine in Pole Creek Canyon north of Roosevelt was claimed this week by Gale R. Rhoades and Ferno Lee Dubray of Price.

This legendary gold, according to Rhoades and Dubray, was originally discovered by Indians living in the area and later taken by Spaniards, who dug mines and forced the Indians to work them. In 1640 or 1650, and again during the early 1800's, the Indians rebelled and killed or drove every Spaniard from the region.

In 1852 Thomas Rhoades, and then in 1855 Caleb Rhoades, became liaisons between the Indians and Brigham Young in retrieving the gold for the L.D.S. Church for the betterment of the Mormon people.

The gold, taken secretly from the mines by Thomas and Caleb Rhoades under the watchful eyes of the Indians was used to mint early Mormon Gold Pieces as a form of monetary exchange. Much of the gold was also used for the interior decorations of the Salt Lake Temple and for the gold-plating of the statue 'Angel Moroni'.

With the deaths of Walkaro, Aropene and then Black Hawk, Chief Tabby ascended to the Ute Chieftainship. Tabby continued the peace and adhered to the agreement made between Walkaro, Aropene and Brigham Young, allowing Caleb Rhoades to take what the church needed of the sacred gold.

When Brigham Young died in 1877, Tabby informed the new Mormon leaders that they could have no more of the precious gold. The influence which

once in silver to the ton. Caleb's pay streak within his mine ran as high as \$150,000 in gold and silver to the ton. If that was the case, and judging from samples taken from the old dump we believe it was the value of this mine today would be staggering."

"The actual ore body on the surface," explained Mr. Dubray, "is well defined and can be traced the length of the fault and the limestone dike, where it outcrops in various localities between limestone and Bishop conglomerate on one side and Weber quartzite on the other. The most valuable ore, of course, being located in pure quartz at the mine dump and in rose quartz in the fissure near the base of the limestone ledge in the Pole Creek Sink.

And, according to Rhoades, "that is precisely where Caleb Rhoades was reported to have retrieved his gold, from the base of the huge gray ledge."

"We were very careful from the beginning of this project," said Mr. Dubray, "to move slowly and to move well within the law to obtain our goals. We cleared our mining operations first with the State, then with the Bureau of Land Management and then finally with the U. S. Forest Service."

To date, it is estimated that about 65 percent of the work planned for the reopening of these old mines has been completed.

As to the extent of future operations, it is generally agreed by and between Rhoades, Dubray and their silent partner (who obtained an undivided one-third interest in their claims for a

substantial fee and for the costs of excavation) that once the work has been continued and when the mines have been reopened, explored, photographed and sampled, a reputable mining company will be contracted for the purpose of completing the operation on a full-scale basis, thus assuring a healthy and prosperous economy within the Uintah Basin area.

Other items of interest discovered recently by the two Price prospectors, in addition to the old mines, have been two ancient Spanish smelters (their walls galzed from tremendous heat,) well-beaten trails and a dilapidated corral once used during the height of Spanish mining activity, and numerous Spanish Treasure Symbols dating back to 1770.

"The trees and rocks of the region, with their deeply-carved symbols, tell much of the story," explained Rhoades. "The fact that this evidence is there clearly shows that the Spaniards had once worked these mines and that lends credence to the legend. Maps, clues and stories passed down from generation to generation establishes part of the history. And our discovery of the mine proves it all as a matter of fact."

When asked if there wasn't at least some doubt about their discovery being that of the Lost Rhoades Gold Mine, Rhoades and Dubray replied, "None at all. It's there, and we have it. Everyone would understand this, too, if they knew the entire story." "Of course, the rumors are sometimes more exciting to hear than are the facts," the prospectors concluded.

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FIND MINE REMNANTS—Gale R. Rhoades, lower left, and Ferno Lee Dubray look over an old Spanish smelter, discovered by the two prospectors while searching for the lost Rhoades gold mine.

the precious gold. Bringham Young had over his people was no longer in force.

Nevertheless, Caleb managed, on more than one occasion, to retrieve more of the gold for the needs of the Church, but did so under the cover of darkness and without Indian knowledge. But that became too dangerous, and he ceased operations in 1882, moving to other Spanish mines in the Rock Creek area where the Indians seemed less militant.

On June 2, 1905, Caleb Baldwin Rhoades passed away at his home in Price, Utah, triggering a long, massive search by the general public for the fabulous lost gold mine.

Rhoades and Dubray, as have many others, have long shared an emotional attachment to this legendary gold mine of Utah history. Together, their experience in the search totals 28 years, much of which became synonymous with hope, hardship and disappointment. However, after March of this year they say they may be able to sit back and relax, knowing that their desires have been at last fulfilled.

It was in March, they explained, that they located the old gold mine with the aid of a map found in 1907 carved within the walls of the old log home of the late Caleb B. Rhoades.

"I withheld this particular map from my book," stated Mr. Rhoades, co-author of the book, "Footprints In The Wilderness;" a history of the Lost Rhoades Mines, "simply because of our own interests in regard to the old mine once worked by my forefathers. But I did tell of the map's contents and I even revealed, unintentionally perhaps but based upon facts available at that time, the exact location of the mine. I don't understand why someone didn't stumble across it."

The map in the possession of Rhoades and Dubray seems to establish, nearly precisely, that the mines are indeed in Pole Creek Canyon. Although unnamed on the map, each major drainage coincides with those of existing creeks and rivers of the region, including such definite landmarks as the Red Ridge, Stillwaters, Sinkholes, "Hough (hugh) Ledge," Tunnel and Shafts and nearby Lakes. In addition to this, eighteen of twenty-one clues left to the family by Caleb Rhoades and all three clues left by the Indians have been placed within the mine site.

"We have a tunnel situated within a fault and at the mouth of a natural cavern or water course entering the base of the huge limestone ledge," said Mr. Dubray, "and at the north end of the ledge a shaft, tailings dump and two small stockpiles of badly decayed mine props. It appears that sometime in the past both mines have been covered intentionally by use of dynamite and excavation of these mines have proved both tedious and dangerous. More than thirty feet of rubble alone was removed from the lower mine and the ancient water channel. In years past as much as twenty-five feet of water had covered the old mine because of this blockage."

Shortly before the turn of the century Caleb B. Rhoades produced assay certificates from surface outcroppings from within the vicinity of his mine showing values of \$21,600.00 in gold and silver to the ton. Assays obtained recently by Rhoades and Dubray, considering inflationary prices of metal today, are very comparable, showing exceptional values in gold, silver, molybdenum, copper and titanium.

"Even the barren rock of the ledge," said Rhoades, "runs one-tenth of an